

# The Reappearance of Three Beauties of Zhang Peiji's C-E Translation of Autumn in Peiping under the Guidance of Functional Equivalence Theory

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**Abstract:** The translation of literary works is not only a process of language conversion, but also an important way to convey culture. This thesis takes the original text of Yu Dafu's essay Autumn in Peiping and Zhang Peiji's English translation as the research object, aiming to explore the essay translation from the perspective of the functional equivalence theory and the three beauties principle, and to make a feasibility analysis of the functional equivalence theory and the three beauties principle for essay translation. Nida's functional equivalence theory is a popular translation theory, which provides powerful theoretical support for translation practice and research. Xu Yuanchong's three beauties principle is the ontology of poetry translation, which plays an important role in guiding poetry translation. Yu Dafu's Autumn in Peiping is one of the representatives of modern Chinese essays, with beautiful language, unique style, and sincere emotion, which has considerable space for research. At present, there are fewer research perspectives on the translation of Autumn in Peiping. This thesis will explore whether the translation can reappear the "three beauties" by analyzing the cases in the English translation of Autumn in Peiping under the guidance of the functional equivalence theory. This thesis compares the original text and the translation through the composite perspective of functional equivalence theory and the three beauties principle, and finds that the translation is able to reproduce the "three beauties" very well, and in some cases it can embody two to three beauties of the "three beauties", i.e., it can embody the beauty in sense while also realizing the beauty in form, etc., showing a remarkable double breakthrough in the transmission of cultural imagery and the reconstruction of aesthetic meaning. This is a remarkable double breakthrough in the transmission of cultural imagery and the reconstruction of aesthetic meaning. This innovative application of cross-literature translation theory not only verifies the extension of the three-beauty theory in prose translation, but also builds up a two-axis coordinate system of "cultural translatability" and "aesthetic equivalence", which provides a model for modern prose translation. In addition, it also proves the applicability of the theory of functional equivalence and the theory of three aesthetics to the translation of prose. As a result, the traditional research perspectives and limitations are broken through, so as to provide reference for the translation endeavor of Chinese prose, in order to promote the dissemination of Chinese culture.

**Keywords:** Functional Equivalence Theory, Three Beauties Principle, Autumn in Peiping, C-E Translation of Essay.

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

In the era of globalization, the cultures of various countries are intertwined, and cultural expressions are constantly being innovated and bursting with new sparks. The desire of the people of all countries to explore and seek other cultures is rising, which makes the issue of cultural dissemination receive higher attention.

Various forms of literary expression in the world, such as novels, dramas, essays and poetry, are the transmitters and disseminators of culture. Chinese essay is famous for its flexible and changeable writing style. It is not confined to the form and can be said to be shape-dispersing but spirit-concentrating, so it is an important carrier of Chinese culture. However, because of the flexibility of essays, it is necessary to retain the charm of essays while not ignoring the connotation conveyed by them, so the translation of essays becomes a huge challenge. Compared with other literary genres such as novels and poems, the translation of Chinese essays into English also needs to be paid attention to.

Zhang Peiji's Selected Modern Chinese Essay 1 collects 52 famous Chinese essay works and translates them into English, reproducing the characteristics of Chinese essays with its profound writing skills, promoting Chinese essays to the

world, and providing a way for foreign readers to understand Chinese culture.

At present, the functional equivalence theory proposed by Nida mainly focuses on translation reports and novel translation, while Xu Yuanchong's three beauties principle is mainly used in poetry analysis. The two theories are rarely used in essays, but they are still applicable. If the two theories are combined in the study of English translation of Chinese essays, they can provide new ideas for this work.

### 1.2. Research Purpose and Questions

English translation of literary works requires accurate transmission of words and cultural connotations, and a good translation must not only be faithful to the original text, but also reflect the artistic conception and rhythmic beauty of the original text. Based on the extensive research and analysis of Nida's functional equivalence theory and Xu Yuanchong's three beauties principle, this thesis will broaden the research content and scope of these two theories, try to enrich their connotations, and apply this research perspective to the English translation of other essays.

Based on Autumn in Peiping, this thesis deeply analyzes how Zhang Peiji's translation realizes the "three beauties", namely beauty in sense, beauty in sound, and beauty in form, under the guidance of the functional equivalence theory,

breaks through the traditional research perspective and limitations, and provides new research directions and ideas for the English translation of Chinese essays. On the one hand, it helps readers at home and abroad to better understand the cultural connotation of the essay, and on the other hand, it can also promote excellent Chinese culture through the channel of C-E translation of essays.

Therefore, this thesis addresses the following two questions:

(1) How applicable is the functional equivalence theory to essay translation?

(2) Under the guidance of the functional equivalence theory, can Zhang Peiji's English translation follow/reproduce the three beauties principle?

### 1.3. Literature Review

In the vast field of literary translation and research of essays, in-depth analysis of classic texts is not only a rediscovery of the artistic value of the work itself, but also an important bridge for cross-cultural exchanges. Yu Dafu's essay *Autumn in Peiping* is a treasure of modern Chinese essays. Its unique artistic charm and profound cultural heritage have attracted the attention and research of many scholars.

Yu Dafu and his works, especially *Autumn in Peiping*, have occupied an important position in the research process of domestic academic circles. The prose of Creation Society represented by Yu Dafu is frank and straightforward with a self-narration color, and *Autumn in Peiping* is a masterpiece of this style and is known as a classic work of modern Chinese essay.

In recent years, domestic scholars' research on *Autumn in Peiping* has shown a diversified and deeper trend. On the one hand, scholars continue to dig deeper from the traditional perspectives of text interpretation, creative background, and artistic features, such as Wang Danyang (2023), who systematically summarized the artistic features, writing techniques, and cultural connotations of the text by combing through the text's forty years of interpretive history, providing rich theoretical resources for subsequent research.

The three beauties principle proposed by Xu Yuanchong(2006: 81) refers to the beauty of meaning, sound and form. Translation should first faithfully express the original meaning. Beyond that, we should preserve the musicality of the words where possible. When meaning and rhythm are secured, we should also try to maintain the visual structure of the original text. The highest art lies in achieving harmony across all three dimensions- meaning, sound, and form. It can be seen that when practicing translation, retaining and conveying the beauty in meaning is the most important, the beauty in sound is the second, and the beauty in form is the least. At present, the theory of three beauties is mainly applied to poetry translation. The theory can also be applied to essays' translation. For example, Fang Jiajia (2018) applies Xu Yuanchong's three beauties principle to the study of prose superlatives, which provides a new research perspective for the translation of prose superlatives. However, the application of the three beauties principle in prose translation is still relatively lacking, and there are still some gaps.

Functional equivalence theory emphasizes that translation should pursue the functional equivalence between the source language and the target language rather than the absolute consistency in form, which coincides with the principle of "faith, attainment and elegance" in the traditional Chinese

view of translation, and provides a solid theoretical support for Chinese translation practice. However, at present, domestic scholars' application of the functional equivalence theory mostly focuses on translation practice reports, and its application is still insufficient in genres with more Chinese flavor, such as essay and poetry.

Zhang Peiji's translation and annotation of the English Translation of series of Selected Modern Chinese Essays, especially its English translation of *Autumn in Peiping*, has become the focus of attention of many scholars. Scholars have analyzed the translation in depth from different perspectives, for example, Lu Dongmei (2011) compared the linguistic expression and imagery construction of the three translations of Zhang Peiji, Wang Jiaosheng, and Zhang Mengjing from a linguistic point of view; Gao Pan (2014) explored the value of translation aesthetic from the point of view of translation aesthetics.

However, although the research on *Autumn in Peiping* has achieved remarkable results in China, there is still room for further expansion and deepening. In particular, there is still a need for more innovative attempts and explorations in the combination of translation theory and literary criticism.

Nida (1964) defined formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence respectively, and in 1969 formally clarified the concept of dynamic equivalence. Dynamic equivalence is the predecessor of the functional equivalence theory, and in his subsequent research, he refined it into functional equivalence theory. This approach emphasizes four dimensions of translation alignment: lexical equivalence, syntactic equivalence, textual equivalence and stylistic equivalence, which provides important theoretical guidance for translation practice.

Nigel Statham (2005) traces the evolution of the functional equivalence theory in depth, and points out the problems encountered in the development process of the theory and the possible future development trends, which further enriches the research connotation of the functional equivalence theory.

In terms of the study of English translation of Chinese prose, although its research scope is relatively limited compared with novels, poetry and other genres, foreign scholars still conduct extensive and in-depth discussions on Chinese prose from a cross-cultural perspective. They not only pay attention to the status of Chinese prose in the history of modern Chinese literature and its reference and influence on Western literature, but also actively try to interpret and criticize Chinese prose by using different translation theories.

However, when it comes to the study of the English translation of *Autumn in Peiping*, there is relatively little attention and research results from foreign scholars. This may be related to factors such as the popularity of the work abroad, the scope of its dissemination, and the diversity of translated versions. However, it is undeniable that as a classic of modern Chinese prose, the English translation of *Autumn in Peiping* still has important academic value and practical significance in the international academic community.

In the context of globalization, the importance of cross-cultural communication is becoming increasingly prominent. In view of the current research status at home and abroad, the research on English translation of Chinese prose still deserves further improvement.

With the deepening of translation studies and the increasing frequency of interdisciplinary exchanges, the study of English translation of Chinese prose in the future will pay more attention to interdisciplinary and multi-perspective research

methods. By combining the theories and methods of linguistics, translation studies, aesthetics and other disciplines, this paper analyzes and interprets Autumn in Peiping and even the English translation of Chinese prose in an all-round and multi-level way. At the same time, in the future, the English translation of Autumn in Peiping will pay more attention to the deepening and expansion of cross-cultural communication. By comparing and analyzing readers' acceptance and feedback of translations in different cultural backgrounds, this paper explores the influence and constraints of cultural differences on translation practice, so as to provide useful reference and enlightenment for cross-cultural communication. In addition, we should also pay attention to the deep integration of translation theory and literary criticism, and future research will pay more attention to the practical application and effect evaluation of translation theory in literary criticism.

To sum up, this paper intends to conduct a more comprehensive and in-depth analysis and discussion of the English translation of Autumn in Peiping on the basis of existing research, combined with Nida's functional equivalence theory and Xu Yuanhong's three beauties principle, and study the applicability and limitations of different translation theories in prose translation, in order to provide more scientific theoretical guidance for the practice of prose translation and contribute new strength to academic research in this field.

#### 1.4. Research Methodology

This thesis studies whether the English translation of Zhang Peiji's Autumn in Peiping can reappear the "three beauties" under the guidance of functional equivalence theory. This thesis will combine the method of literature review, case study method and descriptive analysis method to make a qualitative analysis of the original text and the translation.

The data and cases in this thesis are derived from Yu Dafu's Autumn in Peiping and Zhang Peiji's Selected Modern Chinese Essay 1, which will be classified according to the four aspects of vocabulary, syntax, text, and style under the functional equivalence theory, compare the original text and the translated text, explore the translation techniques of the text, and analyze the "three beauties" of sense, sound, and form.

#### 1.5. Thesis Layout

This thesis consists of four chapters: introduction, theoretical framework, case study and conclusion.

Chapter one is a brief introduction to this thesis.

The second chapter expounds on the two theories involved in this thesis, namely Nida's functional equivalence theory and Xu Yuanhong's three beauties principle, and makes a simple diagram combining the two theories to guide the writing of this thesis.

The third chapter is the main part of the thesis. Under the guidance of the functional equivalence theory and the three beauties principle, the thesis makes a comparative analysis of the original text and the translation of Autumn in Peiping, so as to explore the applicability of functional equivalence theory to essay translation and the reappearance of the three beauties.

The last chapter is the conclusion, which aims to summarize the research findings, put forward the shortcomings and problems of the thesis, and make prospects for the C-E translation of Chinese essays.

## 2. Case Study of Zhang Peiji's Translation of Autumn in Peiping

This chapter classifies and analyzes the "three beauties" embodied in Zhang Peiji's translation according to four aspects: vocabulary, syntax, text and style. In this chapter, Yu Dafu's original text is cited as the source text (ST), and Zhang Peiji's translation is cited as the target text (TT).

### 2.1. Lexical Equivalence

While translating, vocabulary is the smallest unit in an article, and more consideration should be given to the choice of words. Vocabulary often has a great impact on the translation, and a proper vocabulary is the finishing touch to the translation, which can better convey the characteristics of the original text. One is obliged to make such adjustments as shifting word order, using verbs in place of nouns, and substituting nouns for pronouns (Nida, 1964: 167). In addition, it is also possible to achieve lexical equivalence by using the methods of adding and subtracting words, direct translation, and paraphrasing.

#### 2.1.1. Beauty in Sense

Example(1)

ST:早晨起来,泡一碗浓茶,向院子一坐,你也能看到很高很高的碧绿的天色,听得到青天下驯鸽的飞声。

TT: ...you can, on getting up at dawn, sit in your courtyard sipping a cup of strong tea, leisurely watch the high azure skies and listen to pigeons circling overhead.

Amplification refers to the addition of some words in translation according to the need of meaning (or rhetoric) and syntax to more faithfully and smoothly express the ideological content of the original text (Zhang Peiji, 2008: 58). From these life-like verbs in the original text like "泡一碗" and "一坐", it can be seen that Yu Dafu wanted to show the comfortable and easeful life in Peiping.

Zhang Peiji fully considered the thoughts and emotions expressed in the original text and added the adverb "leisurely". The root of this word is "leisure", which is a noun that means "time that is spent doing what you enjoy when you are not" in OALD. Its corresponding Chinese interpretation is "空闲, 悠闲", which is consistent with the emotion expressed in the original text, so that the translation can not only be faithful and smooth, but also reappear the beauty of the original sense.

Example (2)

ST:秋蝉的衰弱的残声,更是北国的特产。

TT: The sporadic feeble chirping of cicadas is especially characteristic of autumn in the North.

The term "特产" refers to "a product that is unique or famous to a place". In English, it can be translated as "specialty". However, the word "特产" in this is a metaphor, referring to "characteristics". Therefore, Zhang Peiji adopted the translation method of paraphrasing. He translated the word "特产" to "especially characteristic". This way accurately conveys the meaning of the original author's message and enables the reader to understand the meaning of the text as quickly as possible.

Example (3)

ST:等枣树叶落,枣子红完,西北风就要起来了,北方便是尘沙灰土的世界,

TT: By the time when they have turned ruddy and the leaves fallen, the north-westerly wind will begin to reign supreme and make a dusty world of the North.

The original word “起来” is a more colloquial expression, referring to the prevalence of northwest wind, which will cause dust to fly in the north. Zhang Peiji used personification in the translation, taking the northwest wind as a ruler and translating it into “reign supreme”, which can better reflect the meaning of the original text. This way of translation enables readers to feel the influence of the northwest wind more profoundly.

### 2.1.2. Beauty in Sound

Poems should be rhythmical, rhyming, smooth and pleasant, this is the beauty in sound of poetry (Xu Yuanchong, 2006: 76). In the same way, the beauty in sound in the essay is also important, which is not as rhythmic as poetry, but the translation of the words in detail is also worth scrutinizing.

#### Example (1)

ST: 在灰沉沉的天底下, 忽而来一阵凉风, 便息列索落地下起雨来了。

TT: A sudden gust of cool wind under the slaty sky, and raindrops will start pitter-pattering.

In this sentence, “灰沉沉” refers to the gray sky, which can also be used to describe people’s bad moods. According to the OALD, “slaty” means “having a dark grey color”. Instead of using the word “gray”, Zhang Peiji used “slaty sky” in his translation, both of these two words begin with the consonant /s/, utilizing the rhetorical device called alliteration. His choice of words makes the translation full of phonetic beauty.

The second one is “息列索落”, a dialect word Yu Dafu used to describe the sound of rain, which on the one hand vividly visualizes the sound of rain, and on the other hand, highlights his inner sadness. Zhang Peiji used the onomatopoeia in English, “pitter-patter”, which not only corresponds to the onomatopoeia in the original text, but also adopts the rhetorical technique of alliteration, which not only reflects the sound beauty of the original text, but also achieves the effect of beauty in form.

#### Example (2)

ST: 最好, 还要在牵牛花底教长着几根疏疏落落的尖细且长的秋草, 使作陪衬。

TT: It will be most desirable to have them set off by some tall thin grass planted underneath here and there.

Whether it is poetry, novels or essays, Chinese literary works have a common characteristic, that is, the writers are good at using reduplicated words and idioms to make the description more vivid, enhance the emotion, or read with rhythmic beauty. However, there is no such concept in English, so when translating reduplicated words, so to achieve a similar effect, the translator can use alliteration or end rhyme. In example (2), the original text used “疏疏落落”, meaning “sparse and cold, not dense”, and Zhang Peiji used “here and there” in his translation. Both of these two words end with “ere”, which not only reproduces the rhythmic beauty of the original text, but also reflects the beauty in form to a certain extent.

## 2.2. Syntactic Equivalence

Nida (1964) proposed the meaning and requirements of the syntactic level in dynamic equivalence. Sentences are used to express the complete connotation of the text, the translator should pay full attention to the difference between the source language and the target language when translating the sentence, otherwise, it will cause translation errors or inaccuracies. Common methods include changing the subject, changing the active and passive voice, affirmation and

negation.

### 2.2.1. Beauty in Form

About the form of poetry beauty, there are two aspects of length and symmetry, it is best to be similar in form, at least to be generally neat (Xu Yuanchong, 2006: 78). Despite the differences in sentence expression between Chinese and English, the beauty in the form of the original text should be reproduced while ensuring syntactic equivalence.

#### Example (1)

ST: 在南方每年到了秋天, 总要想陶然亭的芦花, 钓鱼台的柳影, 西山的虫唱, 玉泉的夜月, 潭柘寺的钟声。

TT: When I am in the South, the arrival of each autumn will put me in mind of Peiping’s Tao Ran Ting with its reed catkins, Diao Yu Tai with its shady willow trees, Western Hills with their chirping insects, Yu Quan Shan Mountain on a moonlight evening and Tan Zhe Si with its reverberating bell.

In the original sentence, Yu Dafu used five similar sentence patterns, that is, “place + specific scene”, to make the sentence symmetrical and rhythmical. In the translation, Zhang Peiji adopted the method of adding “with” and using parallelism. This is consistent with the beauty in form of the original text.

#### Example (2)

ST: 比起北国的秋来, 正像是黄酒之于白干, 稀饭之于馍馍, 鲈鱼之于大蟹, 黄犬之于骆驼。

TT: Southern autumn is to Northern autumn what yellow rice wine is to kaoliang wine, congee to steamed buns, perches to crabs, yellow dogs to camels.

In the original text, there are four “之于”, which means “对……来说” in Chinese. Comparing the autumn in the south with the autumn in the north, it shows that Yu Dafu loves the autumn in the north. When translating, Zhang Peiji used “to”, which is not only concise, but also retains the beauty of the sentence structure of the original text, so that readers can better feel the creative style of Yu Dafu’s essays when reading the translation.

#### Example (3)

ST: 足见有感觉的动物, 有情趣的人类, 对于秋, 总是一样的能特别引起深沉, 幽远, 严厉, 萧索的感触来的。

TT: All that goes to show that all live creatures and sensitive humans alike are prone to the feeling of depth, remoteness, severity and bleakness.

In the original sentence, Yu Dafu used four two-character words to summarize people’s feelings about autumn, making the sentence look neat and symmetrical. Zhang Peiji’s translation converts the adjectives of the original text into nouns, without repetition, and the language is concise, so that the beauty in form of the original text can be well reflected in the translation. In addition, Zhang’s choice of words gives people a sense of coldness and sadness, which is consistent with the emotion of the text, making people immersive. At the same time, it also has a certain sense of rhythm.

#### Example (4)

ST: 一层雨过, 云渐渐地卷向了西去。

TT: Soon when the rain is over, the clouds begin gradually to roll towards the west.

The original “一层” does not directly refer to the specific amount of rain, but uses it to imply the shortness and lightness of the rain, and at the same time implies a change of time sequence. Zhang Peiji selected “soon when the rain is over”, which retains the ambiguity of the temporal connection in the original text, while the word “when” implies a shift in the time sequence. The logic of time sequence is made clear, so

that English readers can visualize the coherence between “the rain stopped” and “the clouds moved”. This kind of treatment is not confined to literal translation, but also skillfully imitates the rhythm of the original phrases by adjusting the syntactic structure, reflecting the fidelity and innovation of the syntactic form. The source text consists of two short sentences, which are concise and condensed, with no connecting words between the sentences, and is only semantically coherent. The translation uses the time clause “soon when...” to connect the main clause “the clouds begin...”, the structure of subordinate clauses and main clauses not only imitates the chronological progression of the original text, but also conforms to the grammatical feature of hypotaxis in English. Zhang Peiji’s translation method retains the formal beauty of the original’s refined language.

### 2.2.2. Beauty in Sense

#### Example (1)

ST:秋并不是名花，也并不是美酒，那一种半开，半醉的状态，在领略秋的过程上，是不合适的。

TT: Unlike famous flowers which are most attractive when half opening, good wine which is most tempting when one is half drunk, autumn, however, is best appreciated in its entirety.

#### Example (2)

ST:不逢北国之秋，已将近十余年了。

TT: It is more than a decade since I last saw autumn in North.

The above two cases are examples of Chinese negative, and English positive. In example (1), Yu Dafu used double negation to illustrate the state of appreciating autumn, and double negation means affirmation, so Zhang Peiji used “is best appreciated in its entirety” in his translation, which not only accurately expressed the connotation of the original text, but also shows the uniqueness of the autumn scenery. In example (2), the phrase “不逢” refers to the fact that he did not feel it, or that it has been a long time since he left Peiping, which shows Yu Dafu’s nostalgia for the autumn in Peiping, as well as his anticipation and excitement for his return to Peiping. It is a unique way of expressing his inner feelings. If translated directly, it may lead to the phenomenon of “Chinese-English”, so Zhang Peiji’s translation is in line with the expression habits of English-speaking countries, which can better reproduce the beauty of the original mood.

#### Example (3)

ST:脚踏上去，声音也没有，气味也没有。

TT: Quiet and smell-less, they feel tiny and soft underfoot.

In the original text, “脚踏上去” implies the subject of action, that is, human, but the translation omits the action description and directly uses “they” (petals of locust trees) as the subject, making the falling pistils the core of perception. This kind of conversion hides “human” into the background and makes the state of things (quiet, smell-less, tiny, soft) become the subject of the mood, which is closer to the aesthetic pursuit of the prose of “blending things with me”. In English, “quiet” usually describes the auditory silence, and here the modification of the inanimate flowers of locust trees is used to transfer the auditory vocabulary to the tactile objects, implying the softness and soundlessness of stepping on the flowers. This synesthesia not only preserves the literal meaning of “no sound” in the original, but also gives the translation a poetic defamiliarization effect.

## 2.3. Textual Equivalence

When translating a text, it is necessary to consider the

coherence and cohesion of the original text. The translator should not only pay attention to the text itself, but also connect with the contextual, situational and cultural contexts, to make the logic of the translation smooth, and try to enable readers to understand the author’s emotions and thoughts from the translation. That is to say, the response of the target readers when appreciating the target text and the original readers when appreciating the original text is almost the same (Wang Gongju, 2022: 136).

### 2.3.1. Beauty in Sense

#### Example (1)

ST:还有秋雨哩，北方的秋雨，也似乎比南方的下得奇，下得有味，下得更像样。

TT: As for autumn rains in the North, they also seem to differ from those in the South, being more appealing, more temperate.

It can be seen from the content of the modal words “哩” in the original text that Yu Dafu’s emotion for autumn rain is love. The word “有味” here does not mean that the food is rich in taste, but that it is interesting and attractive. Therefore, Zhang Peiji adopted the domesticating method to translate “有味” as “appealing”. According to the OALD, it means “attractive or interesting”. “像样” is a colloquial Chinese expression that means “有节制的” in this case, if it is translated literally, it will be difficult to convey what the author wants to express, and it will be confusing for the readers. Zhang Peiji took into account the context and reproduced the emotion of the original text when translating. At the same time, Zhang Peiji used two “more”, which also achieved a certain degree of similarity in form with the use of three “下得” in the original text.

#### Example (2)

ST:从槐树叶底，朝东细数着一丝一丝漏下来的日光，或在破壁腰中，静对着像喇叭似的牵牛花（朝荣）的蓝朵，自然而然地也能感觉到十分的秋意。

TT: Saunter eastward under locust trees to closely observe streaks of sunlight filtering through their foliage, or quietly watch the trumpet-shaped blue flowers of morning glories climbing half way up a dilapidated wall, and an intense feeling of autumn will of itself well up inside you.

The original text depicts a relaxing scene in the autumn nature. Although Yu Dafu did not use too many modifiers when writing this essay, the language is very simple and plain, Zhang Peiji translated it by feeling the scene in the original text and combining the description of the context, added the word “saunter”, which means “漫步、闲逛”. Through this verb, the kind of leisurely and beautiful atmosphere of the original text is reproduced and transmitted to the reader, achieving a higher level of textual equivalence.

#### Example (3)

ST:我的不远千里，要从杭州赶上青岛，更要从青岛赶上北平来的理由，也不过想饱尝一尝这“秋”，这故都的秋味。

TT: To enjoy its atmosphere to the full in the onetime capital, I have, therefore, made light of travelling a long distance from Hangzhou to Qingdao, and thence to Peiping.

This sentence is located at the beginning of the whole prose, and the “故都” in Yu Dafu’s original title “故都的秋” actually refers to Peiping, while Zhang Peiji did not translate “故都” into ancient capital, but directly wrote “Peiping”, which is more straightforward and impressive. However, considering the differences in cultural backgrounds, in order

to facilitate the understanding of foreign readers, Zhang Peiji literally translated “故都” into “onetime capital” at the beginning of the article, which is also the only time in the article that such a translation is made, using the word “onetime” to establish the slightly woeful tone of the prose, and also indicate that Peiping is the capital of China, so as to avoid misunderstanding.

### 2.3.2. Beauty in Form

Example (1)

ST: 一个人夹在苏州上海杭州……尝不透，赏玩不到十足。

TT: While muddling along... I feel nothing but a little chill... style of the season.

In the original text, “一个人” has two meanings in Chinese, one is “我”, and the other means “除了我之外的单独的人”. Autumn in Peiping is Yu Dafu’s daily essay, and the diary is written in the first person, so the “一个人” here refers to “I”, that is, the author himself. Zhang Peiji did not simply use the third-person narrative perspective of “one” or “a person” in his translation, but took into account the cultural context and retained the first-person form of the original text to avoid the misunderstandings that may be caused by the cultural differences between China and the West.

Example (2)

ST: 秋天,无论在什么地方的秋天,总是好的;可是啊,北国的秋,却特别地来得清,来得静,来得悲凉。

TT: Autumn, wherever it is, always has something to recommend itself. In North China, however, it is particularly limpid, serene and melancholy.

Example (3)

ST: 秋天,这北国的秋天,若留得住的话,我愿把寿命的三分之二折去,换得一个三分之一的零头。

TT: Autumn, I mean Northern autumn, if only it could be made to last forever! I would be more than willing to keep but one-third of my life-span and have two-thirds of it bartered for the prolonged stay of the season!

Example (2) and example (3) are the beginning and end of Autumn in Peiping respectively. The structure of the original two sentences is similar, and short sentences are often used.

Zhang Peiji noticed this characteristic of the text, so in the translation, he uses parenthesis such as “wherever it is” and “I mean Northern autumn”, so that the style of the original and the target text is similar, and the beginning is on target with the end achieving the effect of textual equivalence. In addition, through the content of “来得悲凉” and “若留得住的话”, it can be seen that the emotion of Yu Dafu’s essay is melancholy. Zhang Peiji and Yu Dafu are both Chinese, so Zhang’s grasp of the emotion of the article is also very accurate.

## 2.4. Stylistic Equivalence

The translation must closely adapt to the stylistic characteristics, and the choice of words and sentences in the translation must meet the needs of the style (Liu Miqing, 2012: 348). Different literary works have different forms of expression, language style, and word choice. For example, novels must have three elements: characters, plot, and environment. Generally speaking, novels are longer. The language style of the poems is more concise, usually with a certain rhyme or rhythm. An essay, on the other hand, is changeable in form and free in structure, but usually, the whole text runs through a kind of thought and emotion, which

is spirit-concentrating. Nida (1982: 13) stated that, though style is secondary to content, it is nevertheless important. Different countries have different definitions and ranges of the same style, and different authors have different writing styles. Therefore, when translating, it is important and necessary to have a sufficient understanding of the writing style of the source text.

### 2.4.1. Beauty in Form

To achieve stylistic equivalence, the translator first needs to pay attention to the form of the original text. Although there is no set format for essay writing, the basic form can still be found in a writer’s work. In order to make the translation easier to understand and accept, the translator should also consider the beauty in form of the translation when translating essays, so that foreign readers can appreciate the beauty of the original text from the translation.

Example (1)

ST: 南国之秋,当然是也有它的特异的的地方的,比如廿四桥的明月,钱塘江的秋潮,普陀山的凉雾,荔枝湾的残荷等等,可是色彩不浓,回味不永。

TT: Autumn in the South also has its unique features, such as the moonlit Ershisi Bridge in Yangzhou, the flowing sea tide at the Qiantangjiang River, the mist-shrouded Putuo Mountain and lotuses at the Lizhiwan Bay. But they all lack strong colour and lingering flavour.

Example (2)

ST: 第一是枣子树;屋角,墙头,茅房边上,灶房门口,它都会一株株地长大起来。

TT: They grow everywhere—around the corner of a house, at the foot of a wall, by the side of a latrine or outside a kitchen door.

Yu Dafu’s essays about scenery, ostensibly describing the scenery, in fact, all connote a wealth of emotions. His description of the scenery is not general or sketchy, but very meticulous. Comparing the original text and the translation in example (1) and example (2), it is found that when writing essays, Yu likes to enrich the content of the text by listing examples. And he always describes them with short sentences or words. Zhang Peiji’s translation can bring out the details of the original text, especially in his choice of positional prepositions while retaining the beauty in form of the original text.

Reading through Zhang Peiji’s translation and comparing it with Yu Dafu’s essay, firstly, it is very obvious that he can handle the genre of essays well and translate the characteristics of essays accurately; secondly, his translation retains Yu Dafu’s personal style, so that foreign readers can also feel the characteristics of the original writing through the translation. All these show that Zhang Peiji’s writing skills are profound.

### 2.4.2. Beauty in Sense

Liu Miqing (2012: 355), mentioned in his book *English Varieties and Translation* (2nd Edition) that translations should pay close attention to the writer’s personal style or the style of the work in addition to adapting to the stylistic needs. The style of a writer’s works is often influenced by the social background. Yu Dafu lived in the first half of the 20th century. His essays always have a sad feeling, which is reflected in Autumn in Peiping. He described the autumn in Peiping from the morning, locust trees, cicadas, rain and fruit trees. On the surface, he wrote about the autumn of the old capital, but in fact, he wrote about his own life in Peiping and his own feelings about this place. To analyze the translation of

Autumn in Peiping, it is necessary to pay attention to Yu Dafu's writing style, so as to better convey the thoughts and emotions contained in the article.

Example (1)

ST:江南, 秋当然也是有的。

TT: There is of course autumn in the South too.

Example (2)

ST:到了秋天, 我想也一定会感到一种不能自己的深情。

TT: I suppose, have deep sentiments in autumn in spite of themselves.

As it is mentioned above, the essay Autumn in Peiping is expressed in the form of a diary. The original text of example (1) and example (2) give the impression of mumbling, and the expression is also more colloquial. If the translator cannot preserve this form, it may cause obstacles for readers to experience Yu Dafu's essay style. However, there are certain difficulties when translating colloquial words, and Zhang Peiji commonly uses analogous expressions in English, such as "of course", "too", and "I suppose", which reappears Yu Dafu's language style.

Example (3)

ST:这秋蝉的嘶叫, 在北平可和蟋蟀耗子一样, 简直像是家家户户都养在家里的家虫。

TT: Because of their ubiquitous shrill noise, these insects in Peiping seem to be living off every household like crickets or mice.

This sentence is set in the autumn scenery of Peiping, juxtaposing the chirping of autumn cicadas with crickets and rats, and giving it a sense of absurd humor of "domestication" through anthropomorphic metaphors. This technique not only highlights the universality of the autumn sound of Peiping ("家家户户"), but also implies the local flavor of market life.

The use of "living off every household" to translate "家家户户都养", and "家虫" is not literally translated as "domestic insects", but use "living off" to imply the symbiotic relationship between humans and insects, which is more in line with English expression habits.

Zhang Peiji translated "蟋蟀耗子" as "crickets or mice" to Western readers to avoid cultural barriers. In addition, the subtle humor of the original text is retained through "seem to be", and the absurdity of "家虫" is not excessively explained, leaving room for readers to reminisce.

### 3. Conclusion

#### 3.1. Major Findings

Under the guidance of Nida's functional equivalence theory and Xu Yuanchong's three beauties principle, the study finally came to the following conclusions by comparing the original text of Yu Dafu's Autumn in Peiping and Zhang Peiji's translation:

First of all, the English translation of Zhang Peiji's Autumn in Peiping can achieve functional equivalence in vocabulary, syntax, text and style. Therefore, functional equivalence theory is also applicable to essay translation. Due to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures and expressions, it is impossible to achieve complete literal correspondences in the translation process, but a series of translation methods can be used to achieve functional equivalence, so that the target text can accurately convey information and reproduce the style of the original text. This thesis not only provides a new perspective for the study of Autumn in Peiping, but also finds that the theory can be

applied to other essay translation studies.

Secondly, the functional equivalence theory does not contradict the three beauties principle. Under the premise of following the perspective of functional equivalence, Zhang Peiji's translation can reproduce at least one of the three beauties through the use of rhetoric, addition, and naturalization. This is a translation strategy that can not only retain literary aesthetic feeling but also convey cultural characteristics, which can be used to solve the problems of dealing with cultural differences and aesthetic reproduction in the literary translation of different languages.

#### 3.2. Limitations and Prospects for Further Study

Although this thesis has drawn certain conclusions and answered the questions raised, there are still great deficiencies:

First, due to the limited knowledge of the authors, there is still a lack of theoretical knowledge of the functional equivalence theory and the three beauties principle, so only the four levels of the functional equivalence theory are analyzed. Due to the author's short of research on translation theory during the undergraduate period, there is a lack of deeper interpretation of the related theories of Nida and Xu Yuanchong. The functional equivalence theory is rich in connotation, and future research can analyze the text from other levels to promote the development of essay C-E translation. In addition to the translation of poetry and essays, the three beauties principle may also be extended to the translation of other types.

In the future, the combination of the two theories can be used in the translation of novels and poetry, especially for poems with the beauty of rhyme and high requirements for format, so as to horizontally compare the difference between Chinese and English in expressing the meaning of poetry.

Second, because of the limited time, it is very difficult to conduct more in-depth research and analysis of the original text and translation of Autumn in Peiping. At the same time, the essay Autumn in Peiping is relatively short, so there are few cases that can be used to support this thesis. The research conclusion of an essay is relatively one-sided and not convincing enough, so it is necessary to analyze more essay works to verify its feasibility. Zhang Peiji has translated many excellent Chinese prose in modern times, including writers of various schools and styles. In addition, there are many excellent translators and translated works in China, which deserve further in-depth research and analysis.

Chinese essay is the carrier of Chinese excellent culture, and to promote the dissemination of Chinese culture, it is essential to continuously innovate the cause of essay translation in terms of translation techniques and theories.

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